

Legislative decisions in 2009 will impact higher education for many years to come

The 2009 Legislative Session is of urgent importance to all those directly and indirectly involved in higher education in Washington State. Decisions made in this biennial funding session have the potential to impact higher education for many years to come.

That's why we'll be publishing the HECB Legislative Report each Friday during the session. It will be posted on the HECB Web site at www.hecb.wa.gov/leg/SessionInformation.asp and distributed via e-mail. If you want to be added or removed from the Legislative Report distribution list, go to this Web page: <http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=HECBLEGREPORT&A=1>

This new report is an expanded version of the Financial Aid Newsletter the HECB has sent out weekly during previous legislative sessions. Financial aid news will continue to be highlighted in this publication, and we will provide links to additional updates on our Web site.

Recommended cuts will challenge institutions

Ann Daley, executive director of the Higher Education Coordinating Board, said the cuts proposed in the Governor's 2009-11 budget present a serious challenge for state higher education institutions as they attempt to maintain their current level of core services. However, she added, the cuts are less than originally expected and far less than in past recessions. [Read more](#)

New committee lineups announced

Beginning with the 2009 session, the Senate Higher Education Committee has a new name: the Senate Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee. Meanwhile, House and Senate caucuses have announced committee memberships in the new session.

House Higher Education Committee

Rep. Deb Wallace, Vancouver, Chair

Rep. Mike Sells, Everett

Rep. Jan Angel, South Kitsap

Rep. John Driscoll, Spokane

Rep. Joe Schmick, Colfax

Rep. Glenn Anderson, Fall City

Rep. Reuven Carlyle, Seattle

Rep. Bob Hasegawa, Seattle

Rep. Scott White, Seattle

Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee

Sen. Derek Kilmer, Gig Harbor, Chair

Sen. Fred Jarrett, Mercer Island, Vice Chair

Sen. Randi Becker, Graham

Sen. Ken Jacobsen, Seattle

Sen. Rosemary McAuliffe, Seattle

Sen. Paull Shin, Edmonds

Sen. Mike Hewitt, Walla Walla

Sen. Jim Kastama, Puyallup

Sen. Cheryl Pflug, Maple Valley

Sen. Val Stevens, Arlington

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A weekly report on higher education during the 2009 Legislative Session



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Daley urges lawmakers to keep focus on long-term goals

What's news:

Olympian: [Wash. lawmakers: Focus will be tackling deficit](#)

PI: [Higher education: Economic vision](#)

Seattle Times: [Legislature starts with a lot fewer journalists](#)

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Budget proposal keeps SFA funding steady in 2009-11

Funding for student financial aid in the Governor's proposed 2009-11 budget would remain steady for the most part and in some cases would increase over funding in the current biennium.

The Governor proposes modest increases for the State Need Grant (SNG), State Work Study (SWS), and WAVE programs. The Washington Scholars program would sustain a first-year cut but receive an increase in year two.

All other financial aid activities – including the Future Teachers

[Read more about Financial Aid](#)

Conditional Scholarship program and the Passport to College Promise program for foster youth—continue to be funded. And additional funding is allocated to the College Bound Scholarship endowment for future scholarship disbursements to eligible students who have been enrolling in the program.

The Governor's proposal also lowers the maximum income cutoff for SNG eligibility to 65 percent of the state's median family income (MFI). This is a reduction from the current year's service level of 70 percent MFI. Using this year's MFI chart, a 65 percent MFI cutoff represents \$49,000 for a family of four.

SNG award amounts for students with MFIs of 51 percent and above would continue to be prorated, but the percentages of awards would be different from those currently in use. For example, a student whose family earns 51 to 65 percent of MFI would receive three-quarters of a maximum award. The Governor's budget would reduce the award to 70 percent, 65 percent or 50 percent of the maximum award in 5 percent increments of MFI.

The maximum SNG award for eligible students attending private four-year schools remains unchanged from the 2008-09 level.

Senate committee urged to keep focus on long-term goals

Ann Daley, HECB executive director, encouraged members of the Senate Higher Education Committee to maintain focus on the long-range goals outlined in the Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education.

"That work is valuable – maybe even more valuable in these kinds of times," Daley said. The plan's central goal is to raise educational attainment to build a stronger economy and society.

Daley, Bill Grinstein, past HECB chair, and others met with the committee on December 4.

Outgoing committee Chair Paull Shin said the state faces a "defining moment" as it considers state institutions' funding requests during the current economic downturn.

[View Ann Daley's PowerPoint presentation.](#)

Next week's schedule:

- **Tuesday Jan. 13:** House Higher Education Committee. Work Session: Strategic Master Plan implementation. 10 a.m., House Hearing Room D.
- **Wednesday Jan. 14:** Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee. Strategic Master Plan and implementation update. 3:30 p.m., Senate Hearing Room 3.
- **Thursday Jan. 15:** House Education Appropriations. Agency and university comments on Governor's budget proposals. 1:30 p.m., House Hearing Room A.

Pre-filed higher education bills:

- [HB 1025](#) Requiring disclosure of certain information relating to higher education course materials.
- [SB 5001](#) - Eliminating the matching fund requirement for the American Indian endowed scholarship program.
- [SB 5007](#) Allowing public technical colleges to offer associate transfer degrees.
- [SB 5043](#) - Convening a work group to develop a single, coordinated student access portal for college information.
- [SB 5044](#) Changing work study provisions
- [SB 5048](#) Providing for coordination of workforce and economic development.

